

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

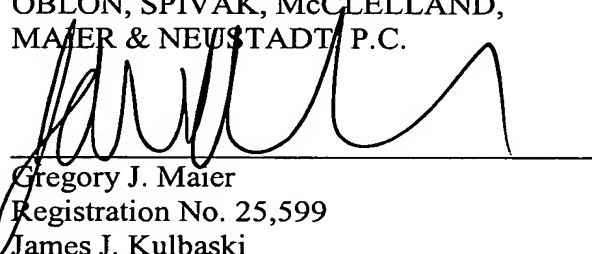
The present application is a continuation of application Serial No. 10/609,616, filed on July 1, 2003, which is a continuation of application Serial No. 09/963,644 (now U.S. Patent No. 6,628,908), filed on September 27, 2001, and claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 to Japanese application number 2000-297354, filed September 28, 2000, the entire contents of each of which is incorporated herein by reference.

Claims 29-33 are currently pending. Claims 1-28 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new Claims 29-33 are added, by the present amendment. Applicants respectfully submit that support for new Claims 29-33 is self-evident from the disclosure as originally filed, including Figures 4 and 6. The specification has been amended to include a cross reference to related applications. No new subject matter is introduced by the foregoing amendment.

Accordingly, Examination of the present application on the merits is believed to be in order. An early and favorable action on the merits is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Registration No. 25,599
James J. Kulbaski
Registration No. 34,648
Attorneys of Record

Customer Number
22850

(OSMMN 08/03)
JJK/CHY:pch

\\ATT\CHY\250917US\250917_Preliminary Amendment.doc
LAST PRINTED 4/21/2004 3:25 PM